

ILLINOIS EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL
October 27, 2008 - 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
160 N. LaSalle, Bilandic Building, Room N-505, Chicago

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Carol Adams, Awilda Adorno, Carol Auer, Jeanna Capito, Tim Carpenter, Martina Casey, Paula Cottone (for Barbara Bowman), Ric Estrada, Lauri Morrison-Frichtl, Ann Gadzikowski (for Martha Arntson), Phyllis Glink, Emily Harris, Gloria Harris, Ava Harston, Kay Henderson, Eboni Howard, Colleen Jones, Tom Layman (for Maria Whelan), Janet Maruna, Mark McHugh, Cordelia Meyer, Harriet Meyer, Janice Moenster, Carolyn Newberry Schwartz, Geoff Obrzut, Rick Pappas, Claudia Quigg, Barbara Quinn, Anthony Raden, , Elliot Regenstein, Linda Saterfield, Sara Slaughter, Luz Maria Solis, Jerry Stermer, Teri Talan, Sheridan Turner (by phone), Mark Valentine, Kathy Villano, Judith Walker Kendrick, Kay Willmoth, Josie Yanguas
Other: Gaylord Gieseke, Carrie Mathers, Diana Rauner, Vanessa Rich

Absent: Ann Alvarez, Jo Anderson, Lori Baas, Robert Blade, Mary Ellen Caron, Representative Elizabeth Coulson, George Davis, Maricela Garcia, Representative Deborah Graham, Vinni Hall, Senator Don Harmon, Michael Johnson, James Kaplan, Terri Lawrence, Trinita Logue, Barry Maram, Maureen Marx

11:00 - 11:10 Plan for the Day (Harriet Meyer)
(10 mins)

- Introductions
- Adoption of June 2008 meeting minutes

Harriet Meyer welcomed Council members and asked members to introduce themselves. She extended an official welcome to new members of the Council. After introductions, she reviewed the agenda for the day's meeting. Harriet then asked members to review the minutes from the June 9, 2008 Early Learning Council meeting. Ava Harston moved to accept the minutes, and Martina Casey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

11:10 – 11:35 Updates and Dialogue (Harriet Meyer and Elliot Regenstein)
(25 mins)

- Welcome new members

Harriet Meyer officially welcomed new Council members and welcomed back continuing members. Harriet noted that some key stakeholders have been added to council membership – The Illinois Association of School Boards now will have a representative appointed to the Council, for example, as will the Principal's Association. Council co-chairs have also reached out to other partners who are playing a big part in early childhood work, like the Latino Policy Forum and Fight Crime, Invest in Kids, and have added a new parent representative. Harriet announced that there have also been some changes in committee leadership. Cynthia Moreno has left DCFS, so she is no longer its representative to the Council, nor is she continuing to chair the Special Populations committee. Vinni Hall has stepped down from her role as a Special Populations co-chair as well, but will be continuing in her capacity as a Council member. Teri Talan, a new member of the full Council, has volunteered to take on the role of Oversight and Coordination committee co-chair. She'll be co-chairing with Judith Walker Kendrick. Harriet thanked Janice Moenster for her leadership and work with the Oversight and Coordination committee since the committee's inception. Janice will continue to serve on the committee, as well as the Executive committee and full Council.

Elliot Regenstein stated that members should have received a packet of materials from the Governor's office regarding new or renewed appointments to the Early Learning Council. Elliot added that members do not need to fill out their party affiliation or date of appointment on the form.

- Early Childhood Data work group

Elliot Regenstein announced that the new Early Childhood Data work group, a work group of the Executive committee, had its first meeting on September 26, 2008. He noted that according to federal law, the Council is required to develop recommendations regarding the establishment of a unified data collection system for public early childhood education and development programs and services throughout the state. The Early Childhood Data work group started on this task at its first meeting by getting a better sense of the landscape and the data currently being collected in our state. The group will build on this in upcoming meetings, working toward identifying categories of data to collect, and identifying the mechanisms to do that. Elliot asked that anyone who may still be interested in joining this group contact Deanna Durica.

- Home Visiting Task Force

Harriet Meyer announced that Illinois was recently awarded a federal grant to begin looking at ways to build early childhood infrastructure for infant and toddler home visiting programs. She emphasized that this is a great opportunity, as the Council has talked at length about the incredible demand for infant and toddler programs in Illinois. The grant will help us to think strategically about the work we do with our youngest children and build systems that will really help to advance the vision of a “big tent” approach to home visiting services. The grant mandates the creation of an advisory body, and that work will take place within a new task force of the Executive committee of the Council. Because of the importance of the work of this task force, Harriet and Elliot will ask the co-chairs – Gaylord Gieseke of Voices for Illinois Children and Diana Rauner from the Ounce of Prevention – to attend Executive committee and Council meetings to report on the progress of the group during this start up or “incubation” period. At some point, this task force could be rolled into the existing infant and toddler committee, but for now we will stand alone as a small, focused body within the Council that will just work on home visiting issues. Harriet officially welcomed Diana and Gaylord and asked Gaylord to take the Council through some background on the federal grant and some of the broad goals it said the task force would address.

Gaylord Gieseke began by stating that the new, five-year grant will enable Illinois to work on building an integrated infrastructure for research-based intensive home visiting programs throughout the state. The models used will include Healthy Parents, Parents Too Soon, Nurse Family Partnership, Healthy Families Illinois, and Parents as Teachers. The grant will enable Illinois to grow its network of home visiting programs, and to grow the Nurse Family Partnership. Working together will be the Department of Human Services (the agency administering the grant) and ISBE, as well as Prevent Child Abuse Illinois, Ounce of Prevention Fund, and Voices for Illinois Children. Additionally, parents will be involved in all levels of the work. Chapin Hall will evaluate the process at the state level and the process and outcomes at the program and community level.

- Illinois Birth to Five Evaluation

Harriet Meyer invited Eboni Howard of the Herr Center at Erikson to give an overview of the Illinois Birth to Five Evaluation. Eboni began by referring to the fact sheet which she passed out to Council members. She stated that the purpose of this three-year evaluation is to examine aspects of Early Childhood Block Grant program access, quality, and outcomes. The Evaluation will take place in two phases. The first phase will focus on gathering baseline and landscape information about ECBG programs, specifically Prevention Initiative and Preschool for All programs. Eboni stated that the evaluation team would be conducting stakeholder interviews in the next few weeks and have an evaluation plan by March 2009. The evaluation advisory board has met three times since June. The second phase of the Evaluation will be to execute the final evaluation plan. In regards to Prevention Initiative programs, the evaluation will focus on access and process, i.e. types of children served and gaps in service. In regards to Preschool for All programs, the evaluation will focus on process i.e. how programs are implemented, and outcomes. The evaluation will not look at access for 3-5 programs. The evaluation team will also look at the whole system, especially transitioning children from 0-3 to 3-5 programs and determining the long-lasting effects of preschool for children. Harriet Meyer stated that a priority is to answer policy questions and make sure legislators know that these programs work in order to maintain funding. Marsha Engquist asked if Chicago data will be included in the evaluation and Eboni responded that it is included in 0-3, but not 3-5. Judith Walker-Kendrick pointed out that there is a need to address whether

programs are working at the administrative level. Phyllis Glink added that the evaluation needs to address integration and that a systems perspective is key. Diana Rauner asked why the evaluation plans do not include an analysis of child outcomes. Eboni replied that the evaluation aims to look at how a program is operating before looking at outcomes.

- Legislative update: FY10 ECBG funding request

Next, Harriet Meyer invited Jerry Stermer from Voices for Illinois Children to provide some information on the advocates' work around their FY10 Early Childhood Block Grant funding request. Jerry stated that the advocates are asking the legislature for a \$77 million increase for the Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG). \$45 million is needed for the annual increase to keep Preschool for All on track, \$28 million to make up for lacking funding from past years, as well as \$4 million to ramp up birth to three funding, for a total of \$77 million. The advocates are also asking that over time, the birth-to-three set-aside be increased to 20 percent. To reach this goal, proportions of new funding appropriated to the Early Childhood Block Grant will be allocated to the set-aside, enabling it to grow without taking funding from existing programs. The bill to increase the set-aside had passed the House unanimously during the last session, and had 20 co-sponsors in the Senate but ultimately was held up in the Senate due to other complications not related to the content of the bill. Additionally, the advocates are working on the passage of a bill that provides for coordination among programs working with Head Start.

- FY09 RFP Process and grant awards

Elliot Regenstein thanked Kay Henderson of ISBE and Barbara Bowman (represented by Paula Cottone and Christine Ryan) from Chicago Public Schools for preparing the materials for the Council around FY09 grant awards. Kay referred to the handout which detailed the FY08 Allocations as well as FY09 newly funded programs. She pointed out that one program was left off the Prevention Initiative list: The Regional Office of Education in Will and Grundy County. She noted that there were 199 Preschool for All applications, and 79 Preschool for All programs will receive new funds, with approximately 30 of those being community-based programs. The total request for funding in response to the fiscal year 2009 RFP was over \$28.5 million. ISBE received 95 Prevention Initiative applications, with ten receiving funding. Of the newly funded programs, two are center-based, and one program will use the Nurse Family Partnership model. The total funding request for new Prevention Initiative programs in response to the RFP was over \$16 million dollars. Kay reported Erikson Institute has received the contract to perform the social emotional consultation for those programs. Kay reported that in 2008, about 80 programs received consultation. Kay also highlighted the new student identification system contracted to IBM which will provide real-time monitoring of enrollment in programs. The Ounce of Prevention Fund received funding for training and technical assistance. The statewide program for monitoring and technical assistance is moving toward a model where programs are visited every three years, and ISBE is collaborating with DHS on creating a shared monitoring plan for programs taking part in the Quality Rating System. Funding was also allocated to increase teacher supply, especially through Gateways to Opportunities scholarships and the Infant Toddler Credential. Kay then asked if Council members had questions. Tim Carpenter asked for the projected number of children who will be served in the Preschool for All program in FY09. Kay replied that approximately 4500-5000 additional children plus those from Chicago Public Schools will be served. She noted that about 91,000 children were served in FY08 in 3-5 programs. Kay added that children cannot be enrolled twice; for example, a child in a morning and afternoon program can only count as enrolled once. Children in special education may be counted twice but not enrolled twice. Nancy Shier asked Kay if there is any way to know the number of children served in special education who are also receiving supplemental PFA services, which Kay affirmed. Elliot thanked Kay for her presentation.

Paula Cottone began her presentation on the Chicago Public Schools by referring to the color maps in the Council packets to illustrate the FY09 grant awards. She stated that new school-based slots, Prevention Initiative and Parental Training programs will serve 5,931 children and 2,577 teen parents. Paula then referred to the CPS draft FY08 allocations handout. She stressed that this document is a draft and had not been shared with Barbara Bowman yet (see attached). Paula stated that CPS is providing funding (through quality enhancement dollars) for current staff at community-based organizations to pursue Bachelor's degrees and type 04 certification. Paula also stated that quality

enhancement funding is providing professional development and social emotional consultation. She stated that 2008 funding provided for training of social emotional consultants, and that 2009 funding would be allocated for programs to access more consultation. Paula reported that CPS is also doing research and evaluation of programs. She stated that the ECERS or ELCO are being done on all school based programs by CPS; CYS is conducting ECERS with community-based programs and will share their results. Harriet Meyer asked if CPS research reports are available to the public. Paula replied that the documents are available online. Judith Walker Kendrick reminded members that she had asked the previous year for a breakdown of administrative costs and social emotional spending. Paula offered to follow up and asked if Judith could send a specific request. Elliot stated that the Council would follow up on this issue at the next Executive Committee meeting.

11:50 – 12:40
(50 mins)

Recommendations

(Elliot Regenstein)

1. FY10 RFP recommendations

(committee co-chairs)

Elliot Regenstein invited committee co-chairs with recommendations to provide an overview of their suggestions for the Council. The Infant and Toddler, Linguistic and Cultural Diversity, Oversight and Coordination, and Special Populations committees presented recommendations. For a summary of committee recommendations, please see the attached materials. The Council discussed the committees' recommendations. Kay Henderson commented that some of the proposed changes may have legal implications, and said that she was surprised that nobody has mentioned linking QRS and Preschool for All. She suggested that a committee should begin work on this issue. Gail Nelson stated that while the early childhood community supports appropriate ESL and bilingual endorsements for teachers working with ELLs, requiring this may create an access issue. She expressed concern that it will be difficult to find enough teachers who have the Type 04 and bilingual certification (recommendation from the Linguistic and Cultural Diversity committee). Awilda Adorno, a Linguistic and Cultural committee co-chair, agreed but said that the Council should support these teacher qualifications as a best practice, and it was suggested that the committee revisit the recommendation to create a timeline for implementation. Elliot asked if there was a motion to accept the recommendations. Judith Walker Kendrick stated that she had a problem with accepting something that costs money but has no funding. Barbara Quinn replied that this motion is to offer these recommendations to ISBE, who will then consider the question of funding. Elliot Regenstein commented that it is not the intention of the Council to make recommendations that would have a significant budget impact without advocating for their funding. Kay Henderson added that the RFP recommendations are to ISBE and that they can't change CPS guidelines. Jeanna Capito moved to accept the recommendation, Ric Estrada seconded and the motion passed unopposed.

2. RFP process recommendation

(Carrie Mathers)

Following a legislative update, Elliot Regenstein introduced Chris Koch, Superintendent of the Illinois State Board of Education, who joined the Council meeting by phone. The Superintendent expressed his appreciation for the Special Populations committee's work on this recommendation. He stated that ISBE is currently working on creating a process for reviewing RFPS and suggesting changes. This process would become standard across ISBE. Superintendent Koch reminded the Council that ISBE will continue to be vigilant in analyzing suggested changes to maintain fairness – ISBE would not make changes which would benefit any specific applicant, for example. Elliot thanked Superintendent Koch for joining the meeting. While ISBE has seen and called helpful the recommendation from the committee, Elliot asked that the committee to table formally submitting their recommendation in light of this information from the Superintendent.

3. Special Education Services Timeline

(Carrie Mathers)

Elliot Regenstein asked Carrie Mathers to summarize the Special Populations committee's recommendation around the special education services timeline. Carrie stated that the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [Sec. 614\(a\)\(1\)\(C\)\(i\)\(I\)](#) states that schools should "...determine whether a child is a child with a disability (as defined in section 602) within 60 days of receiving parental consent for the evaluation...". She reported that Illinois has established a 60 school-day rather than a 60 calendar day timeframe within which the evaluation must be conducted.

She added that with the number of holidays, teacher in-service days, winter, spring, and summer breaks, the 60 school-day requirement could (and does according to teacher and early childhood program feedback) often stretch across several months and in some cases school years. Carrie stated that the committee is recommending that the timeline be changed from 60 school days to 60 calendar days. Elliot provided some background on this issue (including the need for statutory change in order for this recommendation to be implemented), and stated that the Executive committee reviewed this recommendation last week and voted to accept it and move it here for the full Council's consideration. They recognized the work of the committee and that this could potentially have a really positive impact on young children. Elliot stated that due to the history and the statutory and legislative implication of the issue, the Executive Committee would set up a meeting before the holidays to include stakeholders in further conversation about the change recommended by the committee before moving forward with the recommendation.

4. Hard to Reach families

(Judith Walker Kendrick, Ric Estrada, Tony Raden)

Next, Elliot reminded the Council of the discussion at the February Council meeting about the need to engage hard to reach families, and since then the work group on Hard to Reach Families of the Oversight and Coordination committee has met several times to develop strategies to engage families. The Policy and Data work group of the Space Capacity committee has met as well, addressing ways to engage families when the issue concerns limitations in physical space for programs. Additionally, he and Harriet had met with representatives of the Governor's office which is very interested in supporting ways to reach currently unserved, at-risk children. As part of the discussion with the Governor's office, the co-chairs also revisited the Council's desire to see Head Start programs access ECBG funding in order to provide Type 04 teachers to the children they serve. The Governor's office was supportive of this as well, but stated that reaching at-risk, currently unserved children should come first.

Judith Walker Kendrick and Tony Raden described the Oversight and Coordination and Space Capacity committees' recommendation. The recommendation calls for the Council to officially state its support for efforts to engage hard to reach families in Illinois in early learning programs, and that the Council supports additional targeted per-child spending for programs with significant populations of hard to reach families. Tony Raden added that, as part of this work, the Space Capacity committee has explored non-capital policy options to expand program space where there is the greatest need. Elliot added that the committee would like to set up targeted line items on a per-child basis and that this recommendation would set the foundation for the years ahead. Linda Saterfield made a motion to accept the recommendation, and Josie Yanguas seconded the motion. The motion passed with one abstention from Kay Willmoth.

12:40 – 12:55
(15 mins)

Committee Reports and Discussion

(Harriet Meyer)

- Research-based models approval process (Mark Valentine)
- Public Awareness update (Jerry Stermer and Kathleen Villano)
- Workforce Development update (Ava Harston)
- Early Childhood Capital RFP guidance (Ric Estrada and Tony Raden)
- Report on the Hard to Reach Children and Families work group (Judith Walker Kendrick)

The committee reports were tabled due to time constraints.

12:55 – 1:00
(5 mins)

Wrap up

(Harriet Meyer)

Elliot apologized that the Council meeting had run late and that there was no time for committee reports. He also reminded the Council of the next tentative meeting date February 23, 2009. Harriet Meyer thanked the members of the Council for their participation and asked for a motion to adjourn. Ava Harston moved to adjourn the meeting. Josie Yanguas seconded the motion, and it was passed unopposed.

